

TROY A. CARTER
2ND DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS
MATERIALS

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
UNDERSERVED, AGRICULTURAL, AND RURAL
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
CONTRACTING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1802

September 8, 2021

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20024

Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon
Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20314

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Dear Administrator Criswell and Lieutenant General Spellmon,

I write today to urge you to ensure that your contracting efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida include full participation by minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned small businesses. Any contracting done pursuant to the Stafford Act or related to disaster recovery efforts in affected areas should fully comply with any applicable small, local, or disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) requirements. I hope you will consider not just meeting these statutory requirements but setting goals that exceed them.

President Biden has recognized the importance of small, local business involvement in federal contracting. In fact, in June of this year, the President directed federal agencies to increase contracting with DBEs including, but not limited to, minority-owned, woman-owned, and veteran-owned businesses by 50%. This is a great effort that illustrates an important step toward equity for our historically and systemically disadvantaged small businesses. Efforts to support and recognize DBEs should always be implemented, and the need to do so is greater in the aftermath of a disaster. Far too often in the past, we have seen local, minority-owned businesses do the actual work of a contract but get paid pennies because the person with the contract put layers of others on top of them. This pitiful history can't continue.

I urge you to heed the President's directive and prioritize contracting for those businesses, in the coming days, weeks and months. Now is the time to increase those commitments. Now is not the time to waive any existing requirements, especially those that help small businesses most in need. Giving our small and local businesses an opportunity to participate in the rebuilding of their own community is key to a strong recovery and stronger communities. It's one of the surest ways we can build back better. I urge you to do everything in your power to provide contracting opportunities to our local small, minority-owned, woman-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

Sincerely,


Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress